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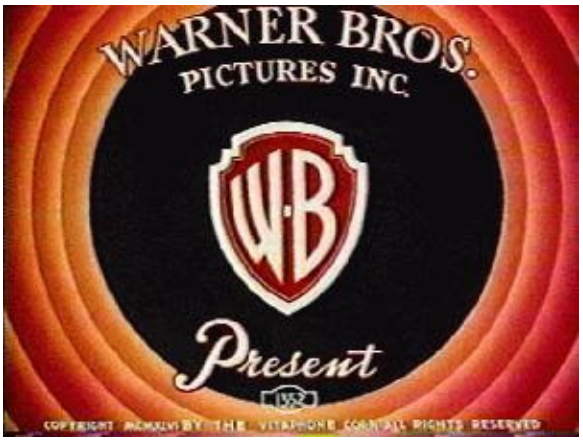
arglebargle!

friday, january 02, 2009

2009 is Bustin' Loose All Over!

Happy New Year, folks!
My new Years resolution for 2009 (one of 'em) is shorter and more frequent posts.
I gotta say, waking up Jan 1 to a day of Looney Tunes on Cartoon Network was a pretty good start! (...and long overdue if you ask me.)



Especially since the closest Bugs and company have been to the airwaves in the last couple of years has been in new productions like the *Duck Dodgers Show* and the *Tweety and Sylvester Mysteries* on Boomerang (And yes, I'm forgetting the *Baby Looney Tunes* incarnation).

Just ten years ago The Looney Tunes characters (including and perhaps most notably Michigan J. Frog) seemed the cornerstone of the Time-Warner company. Every mall had a Warners store, and every Warners store had an "animation department" in the back that sold both limited-edition and production cels from Warners television and theatrical productions. Thanks in part to the aquisition of Cartoon Network at the end of the 1990s, for the first time in television history one channel would have the rights to show ANY cartoon from the Warner Cartoon canon (except for the dozen or so that they couldn't due to some outwageous steweotypes). Unfortunately *this* animation heyday was entirely too short-lived.

about me

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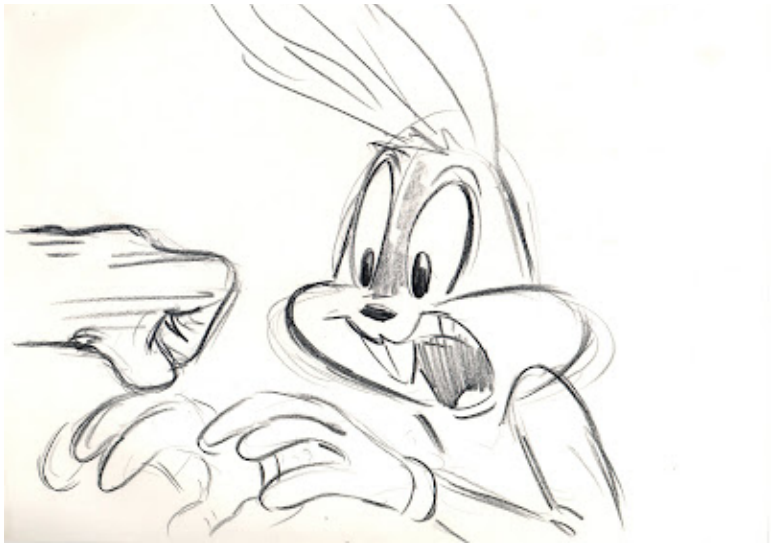
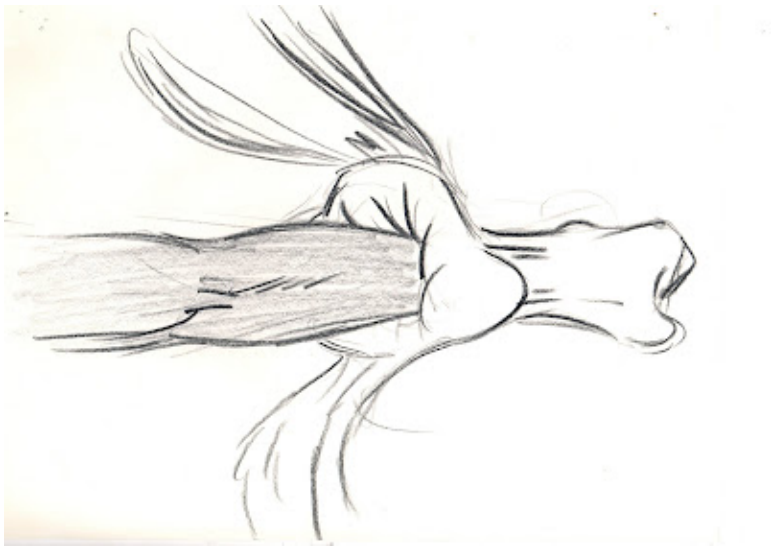


After 911 and the closing of the Warners stores it seemed interest in Bugs, Daffy -- and in fact, ALL "old product" characters started to wain (With the notable exception of *Scooby Doo*). There was a definite and conscious effort at CN to leave the past behind and develop new properties to mine.



The Looney interest level continued to diminish however, until a couple of years ago, when the theatrical shorts disappeared from the airwaves altogether -- only to be viewed online and in other high-pixal venues like YouTube. Even though MGM Tom and Jerry Cartoons (and on Boomerang a half-hour block just called "MGM Cartoons") continue to run every few hours.

2009 is Bustin' Loose All Over!
R. I. P. Bettie Page
Black & White in COLOR #5 : The CREATURE!

archives

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I Power Blogger

Oh these? They're pitch boards from Space Jam where the Mon-stars are trashing the Looneys.
The pin-holes prove these ideas *were* pinned up and part of the working movie storyboard for a period of time. The fact that they exist at all only serves to illustrate nicely the ongoing love-hate relationship Warners seems to have with it's own characters. I'm sure the old Warners cartoon directors woulda had a big larf at the idea that 50 years in the future the company that Jack Warner built would only air the competition's (MGM) cartoons on their (mostly) Cartoon TV Network.

Darned ironic -- That's all I'm sayin'.

Hopefully though, the CN New Years day Looney Tunes Marathon is a good sign for the future!

'Cause as Mark Evanier said almost a decade ago:

You can't kill these films.

They've sure tried. They've cut them and hidden them and traced them and chopped them into little pieces. Over and over, business-types have given up on Bugs; over and over, they've been proven wrong. Like Lazarus, Jason or even Bill Clinton, he keeps coming back, ever stronger. And always will.

The WB cartoons may be the most lucrative things ever put on celluloid. They returned their initial investments when they were first exhibited, and all the thousands of reruns since have yielded almost pure profit. That's not even looking at the billions (with a "b") grossed from toys and comics

and other merchandise featuring Bugs, Daffy, Porky, Tweety and the gang.

Hopefully 2009 is the year somebody up the ladder will "re-discover" this (yet again...).

I know the REAL Bugs and Elmer (photo circa 1987) would love to see it happen!

Big Thanks and a HAPPY NEW YEAR go out to J.D.S., Time Warner, Splash News and Mark Evanier!

posted by c. martin croker at 8:37 pm | 6 comments